



News From Congresswoman Hilda L. Solis 32nd Congressional District of California

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 17, 2005

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SOLIS JOINS DINGELL TO INTRODUCE SECONDARY CONTAINMENT BILL

Republican Energy Bill Weakens Groundwater Protections, Gives Polluters a Free Ride

WASHINGTON, D.C.-Today, Congresswoman Hilda L. Solis (CA-32), Ranking Democratic Member of the Environment and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee, and Energy and Commerce Committee Ranking Democratic Member Congressman John Dingell (MI-15) introduced legislation requiring new gasoline tanks buried underground to include secondary reinforcements on both the tank and pipes. The bill also requires that tanks placed within 1,000 feet of a community water system be monitored for leaks (H.R.879). The Republican energy bill includes proposals that would weaken existing regulations which protect public health and groundwater.

“We introduced this legislation to protect our water supplies, water providers and the public health of our families. The Republican energy bill gives a free ride to polluters at the expense of water providers, consumers and the health of our families. Reinforced walls and pipes, coupled with proper monitoring, will prevent contamination – protecting public health and businesses and preventing the need for costly cleanup,” said Congresswoman Solis.

More than 136,000 underground storage tanks nationwide and over 100 in the San Gabriel Valley are leaking petroleum, including MTBE. Over the next 10 years the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that more than 120,000 tanks could begin leaking. Existing federal law has neither requirements for secondary measures nor monitoring to prevent leaks from reaching the soil and groundwater. California has required secondary reinforcements for more than 20 years.

Gasoline, MTBE, and other contaminants pollute the soil and water supply, resulting in costly cleanups and threaten public health. The Republican energy bill, in addition to exempting manufacturers of MTBE, a suspected carcinogen, from any liability for its cleanup in groundwater, restricts the ability of the Environmental Protection Agency to seek recovery of cleanup costs from polluters, delays inspections for many underground tanks and fails to take steps to prevent future leaks.

Other original sponsors include: Tammy Baldwin (WI-02), Lois Capps (CA-23), Edward J. Markey (MA-07), Frank Pallone (NJ-06), Janice D. Schakowsky (IL-09), Bart Stupak (MI-01) and Albert Russell Wynn (MD-04).

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